

July 2004

# SCHOOL FINANCE UPDATE

*A Monthly Newsletter Published by the School Finance Division*

Linda McCulloch, State Superintendent  
Montana Office of Public Instruction  
PO Box 202501  
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Phone (406) 444-4401  
FAX (406) 444-0509  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us>



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## **Ready, Set, MAEFAIRS!!**

MAEFAIRS is now "open" for the FY 04 Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) and FY 05 Final Budget. As always, we have notified registered users by email. Please follow the instructions listed in the email message.

If you're a new user of MAEFAIRS, plan to attend the MAEFAIRS training in Helena on July 29. Contact Nica Carte, [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us) to preregister.

## **Have Students in Private Day Treatment?**

If your district places students through Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in private day treatment programs like the Yellowstone Academy's High School

Day Treatment Program, you may be eligible for partial reimbursement under SB 135.



To claim your payment, submit form FP-15 to OPI by July 30. The day treatment students should be listed in part III.

OPI Contact: Mike Waterman, (406) 444-4524 or [mwaterman@state.mt.us](mailto:mwaterman@state.mt.us).

## **Administrative Rules (ARMs) Finalized**



OPI held a hearing on June 29 to consider comments on proposed changes to school finance and transportation sections of the ARMs. The responses to comments are posted at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Supt/NewsStories/0458C75C9C.nclk>

Changes were discussed at the OPI School Budgeting and Accounting Workshops in July.

OPI Contact: Joan Anderson, (406) 444-1960 or [janderson@state.mt.us](mailto:janderson@state.mt.us).

## **Info about SB 424 Retirement Fund Limits**

Currently, an appeal is pending concerning whether SB 424 retirement fund restrictions conflict with Federal regulations of the Impact Aid Program. See discussion and recommendations at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/ImpactAid/Letter62204.pdf>

Excel spreadsheet for FY04 (can also be used for FY 05) posted at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/budget/limitFY04fedRtmt.xls>

More info about SB 424 retirement provisions:

SB 424 Q&A: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/budget/SB424Q&A.pdf>

Impacts of SB 424 on Compliance with Federal Grant Regulations:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/FederalPrograms/SupplementNotSupplant.html>

OPI Contact: Bonnie Maze, (406) 444-3249 or [bmaze@state.mt.us](mailto:bmaze@state.mt.us).

## Grant Cash for Year-End

Be sure to request cash by August 10 for OPI grants that closed June 30. OPI cannot honor cash requests submitted after the closeout deadlines of August 10 (for grants ended June 30) or November 10 (for grants ended September 30).

In Case You Missed It....

## Indirect Cost Rate Applications for FY05

Indirect cost rates are OPTIONAL, but a district must have a rate approved by OPI each year in order to draw indirect cost recoveries from state and federal grants. Information was posted on the web and announced in previous months. OPI Contact: Denise Ulberg (406) 444-0783 or [dulberg@state.mt.us](mailto:dulberg@state.mt.us).

## Budget Deadlines

Remember to publish notice of the budget hearing between July 1 and August 4, 2004, per MCA 20-9-115. According to MCA 20-9-141, the budget meeting must be held on or by August 15. The budget is due to the county within 5 days of adoption (no later than August 20). Levies are fixed by the County Commissioners on August 23. The Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) and Final Budgets must be submitted to OPI by September 13.



OPI Contact: Bonnie Maze, (406) 444-3249 or [bmaze@state.mt.us](mailto:bmaze@state.mt.us).

*Time to Schedule Bus Inspections  
for 1<sup>st</sup> semester!!!*

*(Before the start of school)*

*OPI Contact : Maxine Mougeot at (406) 444-3096 or  
[mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).*

## Taxable Valuation Reports

The Department of Revenue (DOR) will issue taxable valuation reports to schools and other local governments by the 1st Monday in August (8/2/04). Under legislation passed in 2003, districts may request an estimated report as of the 2nd Monday in July, but the final report for the 1st Monday in August is the official taxable valuation for calculating mill levies for budgets.

OPI Contact: Tal Redpath, (406) 444-3024 or [redpath@state.mt.us](mailto:redpath@state.mt.us).

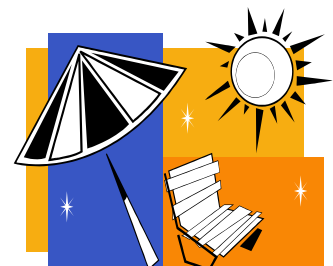
## School Block Grants for FY 2004-05

As you do the budget for next year, remember the school block grants are as follows:

- 1) General Fund (01) will receive a school block grant payment that equals FY04 receipts times 1.0076 (i.e., increased by 0.76%); [MAEFAIRS will prefill the payment amount]
- 2) Transportation Fund (10) (rev. code 3444) will receive the FY04 receipts times 1.0076 (i.e., increased by 0.76%). [MAEFAIRS will prefill the payment amount];
- 3) Technology Fund (28) and Flexibility Fund (29) (rev. code 3444) currently receive no school block grant, and still will receive none;
- 4) Debt Service Fund (50) does not receive a block grant;
- 5) The Combined Block Grant (rev. code 3445) can be deposited into any budgeted fund, including General Fund (01), at the trustees' discretion. The planned deposits will be listed as anticipated revenue on the budget forms. [MAEFAIRS will report the combined amount and then allow allocation to funds.]

Contact: Bonnie Maze, (406) 444-3249 or [bmaze@state.mt.us](mailto:bmaze@state.mt.us).

*Hope you're  
having a nice  
summer!!!!*



## Updated -- Transfers Between Funds Matrix

School Finance Division recently posted a chart to help explain the fund transfers that are allowed under 20-9-208, MCA and various other laws and Administrative Rules.



Following the Administrative Rules hearing on June 29, OPI updated and re-posted a chart reflecting the most current Administrative Rules. Several provisions listed on the draft chart were removed because they were not adopted in final rules.

A second tab on the worksheet lists the requirements for closing funds.

The final chart is posted on the School Accounting webpage at this link:  
[http://www.opi.stte.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/Acct/Transfer\\_Matrix.xls](http://www.opi.stte.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/Acct/Transfer_Matrix.xls) (Excel format)

OPI Contact: Denise Ulberg, (406) 444-0783 or <mailto:dulberg@state.mt.us>

## Useful Websites

**List of all Official OPI E-Mails:**  
[http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official\\_Mail](http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official_Mail)

**CFDA Numbers for Federal Grants:** <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/FederalPrograms/handbook.html> (Appendix F of the OPI State and Federal Grants Handbook)

**Fill-In Forms Provided by MASBO:** Several fill-in forms (TR-1, TR-4, and grant cash request forms) are available on the MASBO website at <http://www.masbo.com>. Special thanks to MASBO's Roger Heimbigner, who developed the forms!

**OPI's GASB 34 Web Page:**  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/gasb34.html>.

**Montana Codes Annotated (MCA) Online:**  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.s/masterMCASearch.htm>

**OPI's "Get Answers" searchable databases:**  
[http://data.opi.state.mt.us/scripts/rightnow.cfg/php.exe/enduser/std\\_alp.php](http://data.opi.state.mt.us/scripts/rightnow.cfg/php.exe/enduser/std_alp.php)

**Bus Safety and Driver Training Videos:**  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/TrainingVideos.pdf>

**School Finance forms and publications:** <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/forms.html>

**FP-14 Student Attendance Agreement (Fill-In Forms!)**  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/FP14Fillin.pdf> (Fill-in Form)

**FP-14A Special Tuition Rates** (used with FP-14)  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/FP14AFillin.pdf> (Fill-in Form)

### ***Get Well Wishes for OPI Staffer, Jim Oberembt.....***

On Friday 7/23, the School Finance Division learned that our coworker, Jim Oberembt, had been rushed to Butte for surgery to repair a blood vessel that had ruptured between his skull and brain. His family reports Jim is recuperating well and has returned home to Helena for a few weeks of rest.

If you'd like to send your get well wishes, Jim's address is:  
1063 N. Warren, Helena, MT 59601.

**OPI School Finance Division Staff**  
Joan Anderson [janderson@state.mt.us](mailto:janderson@state.mt.us)  
Nica Carte [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us)  
Bonnie Maze [bmaze@state.mt.us](mailto:bmaze@state.mt.us)  
Jim Oberembt [joberembt@state.mt.us](mailto:joberembt@state.mt.us)  
Tal Redpath [redpath@state.mt.us](mailto:redpath@state.mt.us)  
Nancy Hall [nhall@state.mt.us](mailto:nhall@state.mt.us)  
Denise Ulberg [dulberg@state.mt.us](mailto:dulberg@state.mt.us)  
Mike Waterman [mwaterman@state.mt.us](mailto:mwaterman@state.mt.us)  
Maxine Mougeot [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us)